

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-04 DOE-11 SOE-02 /076 W
-----098381 311313Z /43

R 310810Z JAN 78
FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8842
INFO CINCPAC
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 1471

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CH
SUBJECT: CRITICISM OF THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION

REF: HONG KONG 0780

1. DURING A RECENT TWO-WEEK TRIP TO CHINA, TWO CONGENOFFS WERE STRUCK BY THE FREQUENCY WITH WHICH CHINESE DESCRIBED THE CULTURAL REVOLUTION (CR) AS A PERIOD OF RETROGRESSION AND INCORRECT POLICY DECISIONS. THESE CRITICS OF THE CR GENERALLY LINKED TOGETHER THE CR OF THE 60'S AND THE "GANG OF FOUR" ERA OF THE 70'S AS ONE LONG PERIOD OF SETBACK. IN REFTEL WE NOTED THAT MEDIA CRITICISM OF CR POLICIES HAS BUILT UP GRADUALLY SINCE LAST SUMMER AND BY NOVEMBER ITS ONCE SACROSANCT HISTORICAL POSITION HAD BEEN SERIOUSLY ERODED. THE MANY NEGATIVE COMMENTS ON THE CR MADE TO THE CONGEN TRAVELERS SUGGEST THAT IN THIS CASE THE OFFICIAL LINE MAY HAVE BEEN SLOW IN CATCHING UP WITH A LIDESPREAD
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POPULAR SENTIMENT.

2. AT WUHAN UNIVERSITY, FOR EXAMPLE, A MEMBER OF THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMITTEE OBSERVED THAT THE LIBRARY'S ACQUISITION OF FOREIGN BOOKS HAD ABRUPTLY STOPPED DURING THE CR BECAUSE OF THE EVIL FOURSOME, WHO ATTACKED ALL FOREIGN BOOKS AND ANYONE WHO DARED

TO READ THEM. ALSO IN WUHAN, A TEMPLE CUSTODIAN, A FORMER MONK, STATED WITH PRIDE THAT DURING THE CR HE HAD PERSONALLY PROTECTED THE TEMPLE AGAINST THE RED GUARDS. A FOREIGN AFFAIRS CADRE IN PEKING PREDICTED THAT INSTURCTION AT THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE INSTITUTE SOON WILL RETIRN TO THE HIGH LEVEL WHICH PREVAILED BEFORE THE CR,WHENV IT WAS DISRUPTED BY THE "ULTRA-LEFTIST" IDEAS OF THE GANG. A CTS GUIDE IN SHANGHAI LAMENTED THAT CHINA'S TOURIST SERVICE WAS INFERIOR TO THE LEVEL "BEFORE THE CR AND THE INTERFERENCE OF THE GANG OF FOUR" AND A GUIDE IN SOOCHOW SAID THAT RIGHT-THINKING PEOPLE THERE HAD BEEN ABLE TO MAINTAIN LOCAL HANDICRAFTS SUCH AS SILK EMBROIDERY AGAINST ATTACKS "DURING THE CR AND GANG FO FOUR PERIODS."

3. WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION ON THE FORMER MONK (WHO WAS AN IMPRESSIVE SCHOLAR OF BUDDHISM), ALL OF THESE CRITICS OF THE CR WERE UNIVERSITY-TRAINED. LESS WELL-EDUCATED CHINESE WITH WHOM THE CONGENOFFS CAME INTO CONTACT, SUCH AS BRIEFERES AT COMMUNES, MADE NO STATEMENTS WHICH WOULD IMPLY CRITICISM OF THE CR AND IN ONE CASE VEN PRAISED THE CR'S SMASHING OF THE "LIU SHAO-CHI REVISIONIST CLIQUE." VERY YOUNG CTS GUIDES ALSO AVOIDED ALL COMMENT ON THE CR. COMMUNE MEMBERS AND PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S GENERALLY CONFIDENTIAL

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WERE NOT DIRECTLY PERSECUTED DURING THE CR AND THEREFORE HAVE LESS REASON TO COMMENT ON IT THAN OTHER

INTELLECTUALS AND CADRES WHO SUFFERED GREATLY FOR TEN YEARS AND MAKE NO BONES ABOUT BEING GLAD THAT ERA HAS ENDED.
SHOESMITH

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 31 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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